GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1787
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2001
REFORMS IN TELECOM SECTOR
SRIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a need for the deregulation of the Telecom sector;

(b) whether the Government have a proposal to take steps as there is a necessity to expand bandwidth which is not possible without deregulation of Telecom sector;

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in that regard;

(d) whether the Government have a proposal for scrapping of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited; and

(e) the steps being taken to bring about reforms in the Telecom sector?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a) & (e) Availability of affordable and effective communications for the citizens is at the core of the vision and goal of New Telecom Policy (NTP-99). NTP-99 also envisages transforming, in a time bound manner, the telecommunication Sector to a greater competitive environment in both urban and rural areas providing equal opportunities and level playing fields for all players. All the telecom services within the country namely, Basic, Cellular Mobile, Radio Paging, Internet, Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT), Voice Mail, National Long Distance (NLD), Global Mobile Personal Communications Service and Public Mobile Radio Trunking Service(PMRTS) have been opened up for private participation.

(b) & (C) The steps taken by the Government to ensure adequate bandwidth availability are as follows:

(i) Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have been permitted to take bandwidth directly from the foreign satellites that are co-ordinated over India for setting up of International Gateways for Internet.

(ii) ISPs have been permitted to set up Submarine Cable Landing Stations for International Gateways for Internet.

(iii) Under the National Long Distance policy, infrastructure providers have been permitted to provide assets such as dark fibres, right of way, duct space etc. and also end to end bandwidth.

(iv) A Bandwidth Advisory Committee consisting of eminent personalities of IT and Telecom industry has been set up to advise Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on the steps to be taken to ensure that bandwidth is available on demand.

(d) No, Sir.